

GREENES
GROATS VVORTH
OF VVITTE: BOVGHT
with a million of Repentance:

*Describing the Folly of Youth, the fallhood of
Make-shift Flatterers, the miserie of the
negligent, and mischiefs of decyning
CVRTEZANS.*

Published at his dying request: *Robert Greene Died*
Sept. 3. 1592. A. D. L.
AND,
Newly corrected, and of many errors purged. *Shakespeare, &c.*
V. 1. 278.

Felicem, fuisse infanctum.



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1621.

CONFIDENTIAL



TO VVITTIE

Poets, or Poeticall Wittes.

A *Witte*, that runnes in this subluna-
rie *Maze*, and takes but *Nature* for
its *Originall*, makes *Reason* and
Iudgement, a payre of false specta-
cles, where-through to take an im-
perfect suruey of *things aboue earth*;
and so leaping ouer the *Light* of diuine direction,
falles hudwinckt into the pitfall of its owne Folly:
For a *Wit* vn-sanctified, is the *Diuels Anuile*, whereon
he forges the engines of *selfe-ruine*. This is the rea-
son, that so many *wit-worn* *Idiots*, after they haue de-
scended from the high stand of *Contemplation*, to
looke into themselues, are forced (the day after the
Fayre) to howle out this olde *Ballad* made in Hell:

Ingenio perij, qui miser ipse meo :

Wit, whither wilt thou? woe is me;

Th' hast brought me to this miserie.

Vnder the wings of a *Wit naturall*, are hatcht these

A 2

three

To wittie Poets,

three unluckie-birds: *Impudence*, *Self-conceit*, *Emulation*. *Impudence* turnes the Key of *Contempt*, and lets in *hard Opinion* to passe in *Iudgement* against the *Generall*, still bearing out her owne *Disease* with a stolne face: her *forme* is reflected from the glasse of *Flattery*, wherein shee shewes fayre, others foule; and doting on *Figures* falsely presented, scornefully kickes downe perfect *Knowledge* to the lowest Region of *Disgrace*.

Self-conceit, shee prodigioussly studies to put out the *Light of Wit*, by seeming to know beyond the reach of *Reason*, as if shee had miraculously discovered some stand from off the earth, about the sight of *Humanity*, from whence ouer-looking all, makes it her owne *glory*, hypercritically to reprove others.

Emulation, shee was nurc't by a shee-Toad; shee neuer lins swelling, till shee burst her selfe, and poysons others: Shee speaks none fayre, but a barber; and him, for feare too; lest hee should shew her the tricke of a Cut-throat: Shee will be none, where shee may not be best: Shee's euer struggling to clamber vp to the narrow toppe of absolute *perfection*, and there to sit alone, whilst the desertfull *hopes* of true *Discretion*, willingly giue vp their *care* and silently content to stay below, or come behind. These prenominated, are the three bold Bayards, that iustle and shoulder for a sitting place in this Worlds wide Court of Requests

quests, when *Vertue* and *Knowledge*, know it better manners to stand and waite.

The bestiall gutlings of this fulsome-feeding age, fall vpon a piece of piping-hot *Poetrie*, as on a *Christmas Pye*, they dabble their dirty fingers in't; itutie vp their stomackes; belch out a soure *Censure*, and then regardlessly thrust it to the lower end o'th table: so that, notwithstanding shee come clad in the richest habite of *Skill*, and pranked out in the liueliest colours of *Conceit*; yet before *Censures* blinking eye, shee appears but an ill-fauoured Dowdie.

Poetrie affords better measure of *Charity*, then *Po-perie*: For, to lend the world a furnish of *Witte*, shee layes her *owne* to pawne: And for her *Humility*, that's ouer-running full: for she will kisse the shadow of a gowtie-toes shadow, and lie crowching at the foote of an *Epistle*; to watch the fall of some *Great-mans* gracefull looke; and at last, for her labour, perhaps, be popt i'th mouth with a *Charles Almes*, that's *Nothing*: *Poetrie* and *Beggerie* are twin-borne brats: they haue one fate from *Birth*, one fall to *Death*; and both *unfortunate*.

Of all other creatures, your *Poet* liues most in, and molt out of danger; and that in two respects: He liues most in danger, to perish for want of *Competency*; and contrariwise, he liues most out of danger, for euer being rifled; because he neuer caries any

To Wittie Poets;

thing about him, worth playing the theefe for. To be a *Poet*, and haue *meanes to be so*, is not to be at all: for hee must put off *himselfe*, and compose his *Parts* after the *Vulgar forme*; be *new*, with mens *new affecti- ons*: he must not run a counter-courfe, out from the sent of those *Humors* the present times approue: A- boue all, he must deifie *Pride*; she must haue tapers of *supple soothings*, set vp before her illustrious *outside*; no matter, if the *Soule* within, sitte poorely without *Light*. The true *Degree*, and iust *Height* of her swolne *Sublimity*, must not be taken, right *as it is*, but as it *seemes to be*: after this, *Imagination* steps out, and (as *Isis Asse* was) guls her with this beleefe; That those *Honours* are bestowed on her, when indeed they are otherwise offered vp to the *painted Idoll* she carries.

O Spirit of *Distraction*! That sacred *Learning*, the happy *Birth* of Heauen; who ha's *Reward* and *Riches* dwelling within her selfe; should be forc't by the furious Tyrant *Want*, so to prostrate her vnble- misht *Body*, as to commit folly with *Earth*, and be- soyle her State of *Cleerenesse*, for so grosse a benefite as *Breath*?

Wit, may not vnaptly be termed, the worlds *gog- gle-eyde Lampe*; which illightning all, darkeneth its owne: and to feede others, deuoures it selfe: *Wit* and *Honesty* cannot abide each others Company; for *Neces- sity* is the *go-betweene*, to set 'em at oddes. *Wit* is a skill-

or Poeticall Writtes.

skilfull Midwife, it can de liuer its *owner* of a bigbellied Purse, and bring the same man to bed of a fouleshirt. There's an English Prouerbe, that, *Wit runs a wool-gathering*: and good reason too: for its commonly *thrid-bare*. A *Poet* and his *Wit*, must be like *Adams* and his *Ape*; they must trudge together from place to place, to shew trickes for a liuing; and that too, (like a *Witches*) euer bare and base: Is not that *wit* superlatiuey sottish? which disburfes large summes of *Labour*, and takes vpon trust, inestimable treasures of *Time*, for *Doomes-day* repayment, onely to purchase a *puffe of praise*; and yet at last, leaues to his Heyre nothing, but the Fee-simple of *Pouerty*? That *Life* therefore is but *Death* about ground, which propounds *Griefe* its *Gain*; and affliction its end and period. But here I meete with an *Exit*: the *Prologue's* ended, and I must off. Now *Reader*, (for I wil not cal thee *gentle*, til I know whether thou wilt bite or no) behold a drie and *withered shadow* (which once was *Greene*) appeare in his natiue colour, new dipt, and a fresh glosse set on him; ready to enter vpon the Stage of triall, to an swere vpon's Gu, and speake his owne part.

Yours; if not, the care's taken,

I.H.





GREENES

GROATS-WORTH

of VVit, bought vvith a million
of Repentance.

In an Iland bound with the Ocean,
there was sometime a Citie situ-
ated, made rich by pperchandize, &
populous by long space; the name is
not mentioned in the Antiquary, or
else wozne out by times antiquity,
what it was, it greatly skills not:
but therein thus it happened. An
olde new made Gentlemⁿ in herein
dwelt of no small credite, exceeding wealthy, and of large
conscience: hee had gathered from many to bestow vpon
one; for though hee had two sonnes, he esteemed but one,
that beeing as him selfe, brought vp to bee Golde bond-
man, was therefore helde verye apparent of his ill
gathered goods. The other was a Scholler, and married
to a proper gentlewoman, and therefore least regarded,
for tis an old sayde Saw: No Learning and Law,
there's no greater foe, then they that nothing know,

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

know: Yet was not the father altogether unlettered, for he had good experience in a Nouerint, and by the vniuersall fearnes therein contained, had diuened many Gentlemen to like unknowne countries: wise he was, for he bare office in his Parish, and late as formally in his fore-furde Coluine, as if he had bene a very upright dealing Burges: he was religious too, neuer without a booke at his belt, and a bolt in his mouth, ready to shote through his kinnesfull neighbour.

And Latine hee had somewhere learned, which though it were but little, yet was it profitable, for he had this Philosophy written in a King, *Tu es curia*, which precept he curiously obserued, being in selis lone so religious, as he held it no point of Charity to part with any thing, of which hee living might make vse.

But as all mortall things are momentary, and no certainty can be found in this vncertaine world, so Gormius, (for that shall be this Officers name) after many a house pang that had pincht his exterior parts, many a crie of the people that moored into heauens presence, was at last with his last Sanctions, by a deadly disease attacked: where against, when he was long considered, and many prayers given ouer, he cald his two Sonnes before him, and willing to performe the old Wordes, *Quia vni sumus*, he thus prepared himselfe, and admonished them: My Sonnes (for so your Mother said ye were) and so I assure my selfe one of you is, & of the other I will make no doubt.

You see the time is come, which I thought would neuer haue approached, and we must now be separated, I feare neuer to meete againe. This last time pates haue I liued bereft with diseases: and might I haue liued extreme more, how euer miserably, I should thinke it happy. But death is relentlesse, and will not be intreated: witlesse, and knowes not what good my gold might doe him: senselesse, and hath no pleasure in the delightfull places I would offer him.

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

him. In brieft, I thinke he hath with this foole my eldest Sonne beene brought vp in the Vniuersity, and therefore accounts, that in riches is no vertue. But you, my Sonne (laying then his hand on the pongers head) haue thou another spirit: for without wealth, life is a death: What is Centry if wealth be wanting, but base seruite beggery? Some comfort yet it is vnto me, to see how many Gallants, sprung of noble Parents, haue croucht to Gorinius, to haue sight of his gold: A gold, desired gold, admired gold: and haue lost their pasturones to Gorinius, because they haue not returned by their day that adored creature: How many Schollers haue written lines in Gorinius praise, & receiued (after long capping & reuerence a sixe penny reward, in sign of my superficial liberality? Briefly, my yong Lucanio, how I haue bene reuerenced, thou hast, when honest men, I confesse haue bene set farre off: for to be rich, is to be any thing, wise, honest, worshipfull, or what not: I tell the, my sone when I came first to this City, my whole Wardrobe was onely a suite of white shewe skins, my wealth, an old Groat, my homming, the wide world. At this instant (I grieve, to part with it;) I haue in ready coine thre score thousand pounds, in Plate and Jewels fiftene thousand, in Bonds and Specialties as much, in Land, nine hundred pound by yere: all which, Lucanio, I bequeath to thee: onely I reserve for Roberto, thy wel read Brother, an old Groat (being the stock I first beganne with) wherewith I wish him to buy him a groat-worth of wit: for he in my life hath reproued my manner of life, and therefore at my death shall not bee contaminated with corrupt gain. Here by the way Gentlemen, I must digresse to shew the reason of Gorinius present speech: Roberto, being come from the Academy, to visite his father, there was a great Feast provided, where for table talke, Roberto knowing his father, and most of the company to bee erectable Ministers,

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

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enueyed nightily againſt that abhorres vice, inſomuch that his bigged teares from diuers of their eyes, and compunction in ſome of their hearts. Dinner being paſt, he comes to his father, requeſting him to take no offence at his liberall ſpeech, ſeeing what he had uttered was truth. Angry ſonne (ſaid he) no by my honeſty (and that is ſomewhat I may ſay to you) but uſe it ſtill, and if thou canſt perſwade any of my neighbours from liuing vpon uſury, I ſhould haue the moze cuſtomers to which when Roberto would haue replied, hee ſhut himſelfe into his ſtudy, and fell to telling ouer his money.

This was Robertoes offence: now retorne me to ſuch Gorinius, who after he had thus vnequally diſtributed his goods & poſſeſſions, beganne to aſke his ſonnes how they liked his bequeſts; either ſeemed agreed, and Roberto bigged him with nothing moze, than repentance of his ſin: looks to thine ſonne, ſaid he, ſonnd boy, and come my Lucanio, let me giue thee god counſell befoze my death: as for you ſonns, your bookes are your counſellozs; and therefore to them I bequeath you: Ah Lucanio, my onely comfort, becauſe I hope thou wilt as thy father haſt gathered, let me bleſſe thee befoze I die. Multiply in wealth my Sonne by any meanes poſſible that thou mayſt, onely ſie Alchymie, for therein are moze deceites then her beggerly Artiſts haue wordes, and yet are the wretches: moze talkatiue then women. But my meaning is, thou ſhouldeſt not ſtand on conſcience in cauſes of profit, but heape treaſure vpon treaſure, for the time of neede: yet ſeeme to be deuout, elſe ſhalt thou be helde vile: frequent holy exerciſes, graue company, & aboute all, vſe the conuerſation of young Gentlemen, who are ſo wedded to prodigalitie, that once in a quarter neceſſity knockes at their chamber dozes: proffer them kindnes to relieue their wants, but be ſure of god aſſurance: giue faire wordes till dayes of payment come, and then vſe my counſe, ſpare none: what though they tell

Greenes Grotf-worth of wir.

of conscience (as a number will talke,) loke but into the dealings of the world, and thou shalt see it but idle words. Seest thou not many perish in the streets, and fall to theft for naue; whom small succor would relieue? then where is conscience, and why art thou bound to vse it more then other men? Seest thou not daylie forgeries, perjuries, oppressions, rackings of the poore, rayling of rents, inhaunting of duties, euen by them that should be, all conscience, if they meant as they speake: but Lucanio, if thou reade well this Booke (and with that he, reacht him Machiauels woorkes at large,) thou shalt see what it is to bee so sole-holy as to make scruple of conscience, where profit presents it selfe.

Besides, thou hast an instance by thy theadbare brother here, who willing to doe no wrong, hath lost his child: right: for who would wish any thing to him, that knowes not how to vse it?

So much Lucanio for conscience: and yet I know not whats the reason, but somewhat stings me inwardly when I speake of it. I father, sayd Roberto, it is the Willom of Conscience, that bages you at the last houre to remember your life, that eternall life may solow your repentance. Out soles, (said this miserable Father) I feele it now, it was onely a strich. I will forwarde with my exhortation to Lucanio, As I sayd my donne, make spoyle of yong Gallants, by insinuating thy selfe amongst them, & be not moued to thinke their Antecessors were famous, but consider thine were obscure, & that thy Father was the first Gentleman of that name. Lucanio, thou art yet a Batchelour, and so keepe thee, till thou meete with one that is thy equall, I meane in wealth, regard not beauty, it is but a bayte to entice thy neighbours eye, and the most fayre, are commonly most fond: vse not too many familiars, for few proue friends, and as easie it is to weigh the wind, as to diue into the thoughts of worlds Clozers.

Greenes Grief-worth of wit.

I tell thee Lucanio, I haue seene, fourescore Winters besides the odde seauen, yet saw I neuer him, that I esteemed as my friend but gold, that desired creature, whom I haue deerey loued and found so firme a friend, as nothing, to mehauing it, hath bene wanting. No man but may thinke dearely of a true friend, and so doe I of it, laying it vnder sure lockes, and lodging my heart therewith.

But now (Ah my Lucanio) now must I leaue it, and so thee I leaue it with this lesson, loue none but thy selfe if thou wilt liue esteemed. So turning him to his study where his chiefe treasure lay, he aloud cryed out in the wise mans words, *O mors quam amara*, O death how bitter is thy memozy to him that hath all pleasures in this life! and so with two or thre lamentable groanes he left his life: and to make short woorks, was by Lucanio his sonne interred, as the custome is, with some solemnities: But leauing him that hath left the woold, to him that censureth of euery wooldy man: passe we to his sorrowes, and see how his long layd by Roze is by Lucanio looked into. The youth was of condition simple, shamefast and flexible to any counsell, which Roberto perceiving, and pondzing how little was left to him, grew in to an inward contempt of his fathers vnequall Legacy, and determinate resolution to worke Lucanio all possible iniury: hereupon thus conuerting the sweetness of his study, to the sharpe thirst of reuenge, he (as euery is seldom idle) sought out fit companions to effect his vnbought resolution. Neither in such a case is ill company farre to seek, for the Sea hath scarce so many weperdies, as populous Cities haue deceyting Wyrens, whose eyes are Adamants, whose wordes are Withcrafts, whose doxes leade downe to death: With one of these female Serpents Roberto consoorts, and they conclude what euer they compassed, equally to share to their contents. This match made, Lucanio was by his brother

Greenes Grose-worth of wit.

they brought to the bush, where he had scarce pruned his boughs, but he was fast lined, and Roberto had what he expected. But that we may keepe sozme, you shall heare how it soztained.

Lucanio being on a time very pensine, his brother brake with him in these tearmes. I wonder Lucanio why you are so disconsolate, that want not any thing in the world that may worke your content. If welth may delight a man, you are with that sufficiently furnished: if exercise may procure a man anye comfort, your word I knowe well, is as well accepted as any mans obligation in this Citie: are saye buildings and pleasant gardens, anye cople of solace: of them I am assured you haue your choise. Conquer brother, you are young, then plod not alonge ther in meditating on our fathers Precepts: which howeuer they saue you of profits, were most vnsauoyle to one of your yeeres applyed. You must not thinke but certaine Merchants of this Citie expect your company, sundry Gentlemen desire your familiarity, and by conuersing with such, you will bee accounted a Gentleman: otherwise a peasant, if ye liue thus obscurely. Besides, which I had almost forgot, and then had all the rest beene nothing, you are a man by nature furnished with all requisite proportion, worthy the loue of any courtly Lady, be she neuer so amorous; you haue wealth to maintaine her, of women not little longed for: words to court her you shall not want, so; my selfe will be your Secretary. Whiche, why stand I to distinguish abillty in particulars, whē in one word it may be said, which no man can gaine say; Lucanio lacketh nothing to delight a wife, no; any thing but a wife to delight him: My young master being thus claied, and puffed vp with his owne prayse, made no longer delay, but haring on his holy day hose, he tricked himselfe vp, and like a fellow that meant good sooth, he clapped his brother on the shoulder, and said, Faith brother Roberto,

and

Greene's Grotto-worth of wit.

and yet say the words, lets goe seeke a wife while it is
hote, both of vs together, He pay well, and I dare turne
you losse to say as well as any of them all: Well, He do
my best, said Roberto, and since wee are so forwarde, lets
goe now and trie our gods fortune.

With this, forth they walke, and Roberto went di-
rectly towards the house, where Lamilia (for so we call
the Curtizan) kept her Hospitall, which was in the
Suburbes of the Citie, pleasantly seated, and made more
delectable by a pleasant Garden, wherein it was situate.
So soone came they within kenne, but distressed
Lamilia, like a cunning Angler made ready her thringe
of baytes, that she might effect Lucanios bane: and to be-
gin, she disconered from her window her beauteous in-
ticing face, & taking a Lute in her hand, that she might
the rather allure, she sang this Sonnet with a delicious
voyce.

Lamilias Song.

Fie, fie on blind fancie,
It hinders youths ioy:
Fayre virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.

When Loue learned first the A B C. of delight,
And knew no figures, nor conceited Phrase:
He simply gaue to due desert her right,
He led not Louers in darke winding wayes,
He plainly wild to loue, or flatly answered no,
But now who lists to proue, shall find it nothing so.

Fie, fie then on fancie,
It hinders youths ioy:
Fayre virgins learne by me
To count loue a toy.

For since he learned to vse the Poets pen,
He learn'd likewise with smoothing words to faine,

Witching

Greenes Groats-worth of wit.

Witching chaste cares with trothlesse tongues of men,
And wronged faith with falshood and disdaine,
He giues a promise now, anon he sweareth no,
Who listeth for to proue, shall finde his changing so :

Fie fie then on fancie,
It hinders youthes ioy,
Fayre Virgins learne by me,
To count loue a toy.

While this painted Sepulchre was shadowing her
corrupting guile, Hiena-like, alluring to destruction,
Roberto and Lucanio vnder the window kept even pace
with every stoppe of her Instrument, but especially,
my young Kuffler, (that befoze time like a Birde in
a Cage, had bene pzentise for thre liues, or one and
twenty yeres at least, to extreme Auarice his deceased
Father) o frowne a world to see, how he sometime limperd
it, strining to set a countenance on his turned face,
that it might seme of Malinescot pzoofe, to behold her
face without blushing : anon, hee would kroake his
bow-bent leg, as though he went to shote lone arrowes
from his thins : then wipe his chinne (for his beard
was not yet grown) with a gold wrought handkercher
whence of purpose hee let fall a handfull of Angels.
This golden shoyne was no sooner rained, but Lamilia,
ceast her song, and Roberto (assuring himselfe the soule
was caught) came to Lucanio, (that stood now as one
that had stared Medusa in the face) and awaked him
from his amazement with these words: What in a
traunce bjoother : whence springs these dumps : are ye
amazed at this obiect : Is there not difference betwene
this delectable life, and the imprisonment you haue all
your life hitherto endured : If the sight and hearing
of this harmonious beauty, worke in you effects of
wonder, what will the possession of so diuine an essence,
wherein beauty and art dwell in their perfectest excel-

Greenes Groats-worth of wit.

lencie. Brother, said Lucanio, lets vsfeto woꝝds, and she be no moꝝe then a woman, I trust youle helpe me to her: and if you doe, well, I say no moꝝe, but I am yours till death vs depart, and what is mine, shall bee yours woꝝld without end, Amen.

Roberto smiling at his simplenesse helpte him to gather vp his doꝝt, golde, and without any moꝝe circumstance led him to Lamiliars house: foꝝ of such places it may be said, as of hell,

Noctes atque dies patet atri ianua Ditis:

So their doꝝes are euer open to entice youth to destruction. They were no sooner entred but Lamilia her selfe like a second Helen, court-like begins to salute Roberto, yet did her wandꝝing eye glance oft at Lucanio: the effect of her entertainment consisted in these tearmes that to her simple house dignioꝝ Roberto was welcome, and his brother the better welcome foꝝ your sake: albeit his good repaꝝt confirmed by his present demeanoꝝ, was of it selfe enough to giue him deserved entertainment, in any place, how honourable soeuer: mutual thanks returned; they led this prodigall child into a parlour garnishd with goodly portraictures of amiable personages, neeres to which, an excellent consort of musicke began at their entrance to play. Lamilia seeing Lucanio stand fast, tooke him by the hand, and tenderly twining him, vsed these woꝝds: Belieue me Gentleman, I am very soꝝry that our rude entertainment is such, as no way may woꝝke your content: foꝝ this I haue noted since your first entring, that your countenance hath bene heauie, and the face being the glasse of the heart, assures me the same is not quiet: would ye wish any thing here that might content you, say but the woꝝd, and assure vs of present deliuerance to effect your full delight. Lucanio being so farr in loue, as he perswaded himselfe, without her

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

her graunt he could not lue, had a good meaning to bitter his mind, but wanting fit woordes, he stood like a frewant that lackt a Prompter; or a Plaler, that being out of his part at his first entrance, is faine to haue the booke to speake what he should perfoyme. Which Roberto perceyuing, replied thus in his behalfe: *Padam,* the Sunnes brightnesse dayleth the beholders eyes: the Sparkle of Gods, amazed humane men: *Tullie Prince of Platoz,* once fainted, though his cause was good; and he that tamed monsters, stood amazed at beantes ornaments: then blame not this young man though he replied not, for he is blinded with the beantie of your Sonne. darkening eyes, made mute with the celestiall Organe of your voyce, and feare of that rich ambush of ambercolored darts, whose points are leuel against his heart. *Well dignio;* Roberto, said she, how euer you interpret their sharpe leuell, be sure they are not bent to doe him hurt, and but that modesty binds vs frome *Padams* from uttering the inward sorrows of our minds, perchance the cause of griefe is ours, how euer men doe colour; for as I am a Virgin I protest (and therewithall she tainted her cheekes with a vermillion blush) I neuer saw Gentleman in my life, in my eye, so gracious as is *Lucanio*; onely this is my griefe, that epyther I am despised, for that hee scoynes for to speake, or else (which is my greater sorrow) I feare hee cannot speake. *Not speake Gentlewoman,* quoth *Lucanio*: that were a leaue indeede: yee, I thanke God I am sound of minde and lim, onely my heart is not as it was wont: but and you be as good as your word, that will soone be well; and forrauing ye of more acquaintance, in token of my plaine meaning, receiue this Diamond, which my old Father loued dearely, and with that deliuered her a Ring. wherein was a pointed Diamond of wonderfull worth. Which she accepting with a lowe song, returned him a like Riband for a

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sauiour;tyed with a Truelouers knot, which he fastened
vnder a sayze Jewell on his Beauer felt.

After this *Diomedis & Glauci permutatio*, my young
master wared cranke, and the musicke continuing, was
very sozward in dauncing, to shew his cunning: and
so desiring them to play on a hozne pipe, layde on the
pauement lustily with his leaden heeles, coznetting like
a ftrade of Signior Roccoes teaching, and wanted no
thing but bels, to bee a Hobby horse in a moztice. Yet
was he soothed in his folly, and what euer he did Lamilia
counted excellent: her prayse made him proud, inso-
much, that if he had not borne intreated, he would ra-
ther haue dyed in his daunce, then left off to shew his
Mistresse delight. At last, reasonably perswaded, seeing
the Table furnished, he was contented to cease, and
settle himselfe to his victuals, on which (hauiug be-
foze laboured) hee fed lustily, especially of a woodcocks
Pie, wherewith Lamilia his Carner, plentifully plyed
him. Full dishes hauing furnisht empty stomacks, and
Lucanio thereby got leasure to talke, fallies to discourse
of his wealth, his landes, his bonds, his abilitie, & how
himselfe with all hee had, was at Spadams Lamalias dis-
posing: desiring her alsoe his Brother, to tell him
simply what she meant. Lamilia replied: O my sweet Lu-
canio, how Iesseme of thee, mine eyes do witnesse, that
like handmaidens, haue attended thy beauteous face,
euer since I first beheld thee: yet seeing lome that lasteth
gathereth by degrees his liking, let this soz that suffice:
If I finde thee firme, Lamilia will bee faithfull: if slee-
ting, she must of necessity be unfortunate that hauing
neuer scene any whom befoze she could affect, she should
be of him iniuriously sozaken. Nay said Lucanio, I dare
say my bzyother here will giue his word: soz that I ac-
cept your owne, said Lamilia, soz with me your credit is
better then your bzyothers. Roberto bzake off their amo-
rous pztattle with these speeches. With eyther of you are
of

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of other so send at y first sight, I doubt not but time wil make your loue moze firme. Yet Adam Lamilia, although my brother and you be thus sozward, some crosse chaunce may come: for Multa cadunt inter calicem supremaque libra. And soz a warning to teach you both wit, He tell you an old wines tale.

Before you goe on with your Tale (quoth Mistresse Lamilia) let me giue you a caueat by the way, which shal be figured in a fable.



Lamiliaes Fable.



He fore on a time came to visit the Gray, partly for kindred, chiefly for craft: and finding the hole emptye of all other company, sauing onely one Badger, enquiring the cause of his solitarinesse, he described the sodaine death of his dam and Sire, with the rest of his consozts. The fore made a Friday face, counterfeiting sorow: but concluding that deaths stroke was vncuitable, perswaded him to seeke some fit mate wherewith to match. The Badger sone agreede, so sozth they went, and in their way met with a wanton ewe stragling from the folde: the fore had the Badger play the tall stripling,

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and strout on his Tiptoes: so; (quoth he) this ewe
is Lady of all these lands, and her brother chiefe Wel-
weather of sundry flockes. To be short, by the Fores
perswasion, there would bee a perpetuall league be-
twene her harmlesse kindred, and all other denouncing
beasts, so; that the Badger was to them all allied: sedu-
ced, she yielded: and the Fore conducted them to the
Badgers habitation. There drawing her aside under
colour of eroytation, puld out his throat to satisfie his
greedy thirst. Here I should note, a yong whelp that
viewed their walk, informed the Shepheard of what
happened. They followed and trayned the Fore and
Badger to the hole, the Fore alsoe had craftily connaid
himselfe away, the Shepheard found the Badger ranting
so; the ewes murther; his lamentation being helde so;
counterfeit, was by the Shepheards dogge wearied. The
Fore escaped: the ewe was spoyled, and ever since be-
twene the Badgers and the dogges, hath continued a
mortal enmitie: And now be advised Roberto
(quoth she) goe so;ward with your
Lale, like not by his insinuation to
turne our mirth to sorrow. Goe
to Lamilia (quoth he) you
feare what I meane not,
but how euer yet take it,
Ile so;ward with
my Lale.

Roberto

Greene's Groate-worth of Wit.



Robertoes Tale.

In the North partes there dwelt
an old Squire that had a yong
daughter his heyre, who had (as
I knowe) Madam Lamilia you
haue had) many yonthfull Gen-
tlemen that long time sued too-
taine her loue. But she knowing
her owne perfection (as women
are by nature proud) would not to any of them vouch-
safe fauour: in so much that they perceyuing her relent-
lesse, shewed themselves not altogether witlesse, but left
her to her fortune, when they found her stowardnesse.
At last it fortuned, among other strangers, a Farmers
sonne visited her fathers house: on whom at the first
sight she was enamoured, he likewise on her. Tokens of
loue past betwene them, eyther acquainted others Pa-
rents of their choise, and they kindly gaue their con-
sent. Whoyt tale to make, married they were, and great
solemnitie was at the wedding feast. A young Gentle-
man that had bene long a suitor to her, veying that
the doughter of a Farmer should bee so preferred, cast
in his mind by what meanes (to marre their metiment)
he might steale away the Wyde. Whereup he conferres
with an olde Weldam, called mother Gunby, dwelling
thereby, whose counsell hauing taken, he fell to his pra-
ctise and dyist, and proceeded thus. In the afternoone
when

Greenes Groatf-worth of wit.

When dauncers were very busie, he takes the bzide by the hand, and after a turne or two, tels her in her eare, he had a secret to impart vnto her, appointing her in any wise, in the euening to finde a time to conferre with him: shee promised she would, and so they parted. Then goes he to the Bzidegrome, and with protestations of entire affects protests that the great sorrow he takes at that which he must utter, whereon depended his especiall credite, if it were knowne, the matter by him should be discovered. After the Bzidegroome promise of secrecie, the Gentleman tels him, that a friend of his receiued that morning from the Bzide a letter, wherein shee willed him with some secret hope to await her comming at a Parke Doe, so that shee detested him in her heart as a base Country Bzide, whom her father compelled her to marry. The Bzidegroome almost out of his wits, beganne to bite his lippe. Nay, said the Gentleman, if you will by me be aduised, you shall save her credit, win her by kindnesse, and yet preuent her wanton complot. As how, sayd the Bzidegroome: Parry thus, sayde the Gentleman: In the euening (so till the Guestes be gone she intends not to gadde) get you on horsebacke, and seems to bee of the company that attends her comming. I am appointed to bring her from the house to the Parke, and from thence fetch a winding compasse of a mile about, but to turne vnto old mother Gunbyes house, where her loue my friend abides, when shee alights, I will conduct her to a chamber far from his lodging, but when the lightes are out, & she expecting her adulterous copemate, your selfe (as reason is) shall pzooue her bedfellow, where priuately you may reppoone her, and in the morning early returne home without trouble. As so the Gentleman my friend, I will excuse her absence to him, by saying, she mockt thee with her maide in steade of her selfe: whom when I knew at her lighting, I disdayned

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ned to bring her unto his presents. The bridegroome gave his hand it should be so.

Now by the way we must understand, this mother Gunby had a Daughter, who all that day late heauily at home with a Willow Garland, so that the Bridegroom (if he had dealt faithfully) should haue wedded her before any other. But men (Lambs) are vnconstant, money now a dayes makes the match, or else the match is made.

But to the matter: the Bridegroome and the Gentleman thus agreed, he took his time, conferred with the Bride, perswaded her that her husband (notwithstanding his sayes shee at the marriage) had swoorne to his alde swetes heart, their neighbour Gunbys Daughter, to be that night her Bewellome: and if she would bring her father, his father, and other kinsmen to the house at midnight, they should find it so.

At this the young Gentlewoman inwardly vext to be by a peasant so abused, promised if she saw likelihood of his slipping away, that then she would doe as he desired.

All this thus doing, the wile womans daughter was trickeily attyred, ready to furnish this pageant, so her old mother provided all things necessary.

Well, supper past, dancing ended, all the guests would home, and the Bridegroome pretending to bring some friend of his home, got his horse, and to the Parke side he rode, and stayed with the horsemen that attended the Gentleman.

Anon came Marian like *Spisiris* Bride and mounted behind the Gentleman, away they past, fetcht their compasse, and at last alight at an old wines house, where suddenly she is conuayed to her chamber, and the bridegroome sent to keepe her company, where he had scarce deuised how to begin his exhortation, but the father of his bride knockt at the chamber doore: at which being

Greene's Groat-worth of wit.

Some what amazed, yet thinking to turne it to a feast, with his wife (as he thought) was in bedde with him, he opened the doze, saying, Father you are heartily welcome, I wonder how you found vs out heere; this deuice to remooue our selues, was with my wiues consent that we might rest quietly without the maids and bachelers disturbing vs. But where is your wife, said the Gentleman: why here in bed, said he. I thought, quoth the other, my daughter had bene your wife, so; sure I am to day shee was giuen you in marriage. You are mer- rily disposed, said the Bridegroom, what thinks you I haue another wife. I thinke but as you speak, quoth the Gentleman, so; my Daughter is below, & you say your wife is in the bed. Balow (said he) you are a merry man, & with that calling out in night gotow, he went downe, where when he saw his wife; the Gentleman his Father, and a number of his friends assembled, he was so confounded, that how to behaue himselfe hee knets not, anely he cryed out that hee was deceined. At this the olde Woman ariued; and making her selfe ignorant of all the whole matter, enquires the cause of that sudden tumult. When she was tolde the new Bridegroom was found in bed with her daughter, she exclaimed a yain & so great an iniury. Marian was called in quozum; she insisted it was by his allurement; he being condemned by all their consents, was iudged unworthy to haue the Gentlewoman vnto his wife, and compelled (so; escaping of punishment) to marrie Marian; and the young Gentleman (so; his care in discovering the Farmers sons lewdnes) was recompensed with the Gentlewomans ear during lone.

Quoth Lamilia, and what of this: Say nothing, say p Roberto, but that I haue told you the effects of sodaine loue: yet the best is, my brother is a maidenly Batcheler; & so; your self, you shans not bin troubled with many Inters. The fewer the better, said Lucanio, But brother

Greenes Groatef-worth of wit.

I can you little thanks for this tale, hereafter I pray you use other Table talks. Lets then end talks, quoth Lamelia, and you (Signior Rucanio) and I will goe to Chess. To Chess, sayde he, what meane you by that. It is a game, sayde she, that the first danger is but a checke, the worst, the giuing of a mate. Well, sayd Roberto, that game ye haue beene at already then, for you checkt him first with your beauty, and gane your selfe for mate to him by your bounty. That is well taken brother, sayde Lucanio, so haue we past our game at Chess. Will ye play at Tables then, said she: I cannot quoth he, for I can goe no further with my game, if I be once taken. Will ye play then at Cardes. I, sayd he, if it be one and thirtie. Whats foles game, sayde she: Weele all to Hazarde, sayd Roberto, and brother you shall make one for an houre or two: contented quoth he: So to dice they went, and fortune so fauoured Lucanio, that while they continued square play, he was no looser. Anon a sonage came about, and his Angels being double winged, flew cleane from before him, Lamelia being the winner, prepared a banquet, which finished, Roberto aduised his brother to depart home, and to furnish himselfe with more crownes, lest hee were outcraked with new commers.

Lucanio loath to be outcountenanced, followed his aduise, desiring him to attend his returne, which he before had determined but requested: for as soone as his brothers backe was turned, Roberto begins to reckon with Lamelia, to be a sharer as well in the money deceitfully wonne, as in the Diamond so wilfully ginen. But these secundum mores meretricis, issted thus with the Scholer, Why Roberto, are you so well read, and yet shew your selfe so shallowe witted, to deride Women so weake of conceit, that they see not into mens demerites. Suppose (to make you my stake to catch the Woodcocke your brother) that my tongue ouerrunning mine in

Greene's Groat-worth of wit.

tent, I speake of liberall reward : but what I promised, there is the point : at least what I part with, I will bee well advised. It may bee you will thus reason : Had not Roberto trained Lucanio vnto Lamillas lute, Lucanio had not now bene Lamillas prey; therefore, sith by Roberto she possesseth her prize, Roberto merites an equall part. Ponderous absurd if so you reason, as well you may reason thus : Lamillas dogge hath kilde her a Dore, therefore his spiritis must make him a pastie. No more pennilesse Poet, thou art beguilde in me, and yet I wonder how thou comdest, thou hast bene so often beguilde. What it saeth with licentious men, as with the chased Boe in the streame, who being greatly refreshed with swimming, neuer feeleth any smart untill he perissh, carelessly wounded with his owne weapons. Reasonlesse Roberto, that hauing but a Hookers place, asked a Ladies reward. Faithlesse Roberto, that hath attempted to betray thy brother, trea-
— ligiously forsaking thy wish, dolerously bene in the fa-
thers eye an abiect: thinkest thou Lamilla so lose, so con-
sozt with one so lewde; No hypocrite, the sweet Gen-
tleman thy brother, I will till death loue, and thv
while I line loath. Whis shee Lamilla giuss thee, o-
ther gettest thou none.

As Roberto would haue replied, Lucanio approched:
to whom Lamilla discouerted the whole doctrit of his bro-
ther, and neuer rested intimating malicious arguments
till Lucanio utterly refused Roberto for his brother, and
for euer forbad him of his house. And when he would
haue perliued reasons, & sould excuse, Lucanios impati-
ence (baged by her importunante malice, forbad all rea-
soning with them that were reasonlesse, and so giuing him
lacke Drums entertainment, shut him out of doores: to whom
he wold follow, and leaue Lucanio to the mercy of La-
milla. Roberto in an extreme extasse, rent his hayre, curst
his destinie, blamed his trecherie, but most of all excla-
med

Greenes Grotf-worth of wit.

med against Lamia: and in her against all enticing
Curtizans, in these tearmes;

What meant the Poets in inuectiue verse,
To sing Medeas shame, and Scillas pride:
Calipsoes charmes, by which so many dide?
Onely for this, their vices they rehearse,
That curious wits which in the world conuerse
May shun the dangers and enticing shewes
Of such false Syrens, those home breeding foes,
That from their eyes their venome do disperse.
So soone kills not the Basiliske with sight,
The Vipers tooth is not so venomous,
The Adders toung not halfe so dangerous,
As they that beare the shadow of delight,
Who chaine blind youthes in trammels of their hayre,
Till waste brings woe, and sorrow hafts despayre.

With this he laid his head on his hand, and leant his
elbow on the ground, sighing out sadly,

Hec pariter telus vulnera fassa meis,

On the other side of the hedge sat one that heard
his sorrow, who getting ouer, came towards him, and
broke off his passion. When he approached, he saluted
Roberto in this sort:

Gentleman quoth he (for so you seeme) I haue by
chance heard your discourse some part of your grieve,
which appeareth to be moze then you will discouer, or
I can conceit. But if you vouchsafe such simple com-
fort as my ability will yeeld, assure your selfe, that I
will endeavour to doe the best, that eyther may pro-
cure your profit, or bying you pleasure: the rather, for
that I suppose you are a Scholler, and pittie it is
men of learning should liue in lacke.

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

Roberto wondering to heare such good words, for that this yron age affordes few that esteeme of vertue, returned him thankefull gratulations, and (byged by necessitie) bittered his present grieffe, beseeching his aduise how he might be employed. Why, easily, quoth he, and greatly to your benefit: for men of my profession get by schollers their whole lining. What is your profession, sayd Roberto? Truly sir, sayd he, I am a player. A Player, quoth Roberto, I toke you rather for a Gentleman of great lining; for if by outward habits men should be censured, I tell you, you would be taken for a substantiall man. So am I where I dwell (quoth the Player) reputed able at my proper cost, to build a windmill. What though the world once went hard with me, when I was fayne to carry my playing fardle a foot-backe: Tempora mutantur, I know you know the meaning of it better then I, but I thus consider it, it is otherwise now: for my very share in playing apparrell, will not be sold for two hundred pounds: truly (sayd Roberto) it is strange, that you should so prosper in that vaine practise, for that it seemes to me, your voyce is nothing gracious. Nay then, sayd the Player, I mislike your iudgement: Why, I am as famous for Delphyngus, and the king of Fairies, as euer was any of my time. The twelve Labours of Hercules haue I terribly thundered on the stage, and played three Scenes of the Diuell in the highway to heauen. Pauer so (said Roberto) then I pray you pardon me. Nay more (quoth the player) I can serue to make a pretty speech, for I was a country Autho, passing at a mayrall; for it was I that pend the Epitall of mans wit, the Dialogue of Diues, and for seven yeres space was absolute interpreter of the Puppets. But now my Almanacke is out of date.

Greene's Groats worth of wit.

The people make no estimation
Of Morals, teaching Education.

Was not this pretty for a plaine rime ctempore, if
ye will yet shall haue more. Say it is enough, said Ro-
berto, but how meane you to vse me? Why sir, in ma-
king Playes, sayde the other, for which you shall be well
paied, if you will take the paines.

Roberto perceiuing no remedie, thought it best to re-
spect his present necessitie, to try his wit, went with
him willinglie: who lodged him at the townesend in a
house of retayle, where what happened our Poet, you
shall hereafter heare. There by conuersing with bad
company, hee grew A malo in peius, falling from one
vice to another, and so hauing found a veine to finger
columes, he grew cranker then Lucanio, who by this
time began to drinke, being thus dealt withall by La-
milia. Shee hauing bewitched him with her enticing
wiles, caused him to consume in lesse then two yeares;
that infinit treasure gathered by his father, with so ma-
ny a poore mans curse. His lands solde, his Jewels
patoned, his money wasted, he was cashiered by Lamilia
that had cosened him of all. Then waliked he like one
of Duke Humfrees Squires, in a thread-bare cloake,
his hose draine out with his holes, and also brisamed
lest his feete should sweate with heate. Now as witlesse
as he was, he remembred his fathers words, his kindnes
to his brother, his carelesnesse of himselfe. In this sor-
row hee fate downe on pennilesse bench, where when
Opus and Vnus tolde him by the chimes in his stomacke,
it was time to sal vnto meate, he was saine with the Co-
mmon to feed vpon the ayre, & make patience his repast.

While he was at his feast, Lamilia came daunting
by, garnished with the iewels whereof shee begunlet
him, which sight serued to close his stomacke after his
cold cheare. Roberto hearing of his brothers beggerie

Greene's Groates worth of wit.

albeit he had little remorse of his miserable state, yet did he seek him out, to use him as a property, whereby Lucanio was somewhat prouided for. But being of simple nature, he serued but for a blocke to whet Robertoes wit on : which the poore soule perceyuing, he forsooke all other hopes of life, and sell to be a notozious Vandal, in which detested course he continued till death. But Roberto now famous for an Arch-playmaking Poet, his purse like the sea, sometime sweld, anon like the same sea fell to a low ebbe, yet selde he wanted, his labours were so well esteemed . Wary this rule he kept, what euer he fingerd afoze hand, was the certaine meanes to vnbinde a bargaine, and being asked why he so sleightly dealt with them that did him good : It becomes me, sayth he, to be contrarie to the world, for commonly when vulgar men receiue earnest, they doe performe; when I am payd any thing afoze hand, I breake my promise. He had thiste of lodgings, where in euery place his hostesse wytte by the woofull remembrance of him his Laundresse and his boy, for they were euer his in household, besides retayners in sundrie other places. His company were lightly the lewdest persons in the land, apt for pilferie, perurie, forgerie, or any villanie. Of these he knew the cast to cogge at cardes, cōsin at Dice, by these he learned the legerdomaines of nips, forris, communicchers, cressyters, lifts, high Lawyers, and all the rabble of that vncleane generation of vipers : and pittie he could hee paint out their whole courses of craft : so cunning he was in all crafts, as nothing rested in him almost but craftinesse. How often the Gentlewoman his wife laboured vainely to recall him, is lamentable to note : but as one giuen ouer to all lewdnes, hee communicated her sorrowfull lines among his loose sculs, that listened at her bootlesse laments. If he could any way get credit on scoles, hee would then brag his Creditors carried Venes, comparing euery round circle to a growing

Greenes Grotel-worth of wit.

ning O. procured by a painfull burthen. The shamesfull end of sundry his comforts, deservously punished for their amisse, wrought no compunction in his heart: of which one, brother to a brothell hee kept, was trust vnder a tree, as round as a ball.

To some of his swearing companions thus it happened, A crew of them sitting in a Laerne carowling, it fortuned an honest Gentleman and his friend to enter their roome, some of them being acquainted with him in their domineriug dzunken beine, would haue no rag, but downe he must sit with them, being placed; no remedy there was, but he must needs keepe euen compasse with their vnseemly carowling: which hee refusing, they fell from high words to sound strokes, so that with much adoe the Gentleman saued his owne, and shifted from their companie. Being gon, one of these tiplers forthwith lackt a gold ring: the other swore they see the Gentleman take it from his hand. Upon this the Gentleman was indited befoze a Iudge, these honest men are deposed: whose wisdome weighing the time of the bzaule gaue light to the Jury, what power wine-washing person had, they according vnto conscience found the Gentleman not guilty: and God released by that verdict the innocent.

With his accusers thus it faced: one of them for murder was worthily executed: one other, neuer since prospered: the third, sitting not long after vpon a lusty horse, the beast dyed suddenly vnder him. God amend the man.

Roberto every day acquainted with these examples, was notwithstanding nothing bettered, but rather hardened in wickednes. At last was that place instituted, God warneth men by dreames and visions in the night, and by known examples in the day: but if hee returne not, he comes vpon him with iudgement that shall be felt. So now when the number of deceites caused

Greene's Groat-worth of wit.

Roberto his hatefull almost to all men, his immeasurable drinking had made him the perfect image of the drayfe, and the loathsome scourge of Lust, tyrannized in his bones: Living in extreme poverty, and having nothing to pay but chalk, which now his host accepted not for currant, this miserable man lay comfortlesly languishing, having but one groat left (the last proportion of his fathers Legacy) which looking on, he cryed, O now it is too late, too late to buy wit with this: and therefore will I see if I can sell to careless youth what I negligently forgot to buy.

Here (Gentlemen) breaks I off Roberto's speech, whose life in most part agreeing with mine, found one self punishment as I have done. Hereafter suppose me the said Roberto, and I will go on with that he promised: Greene will send you now his groat-worth of wit, that never shewed a mites worth in his life: and though no man now be by, to doe me good, yet ere I die, I will by my repentance induce to do all men good.

Deceyuing world that with alluring toys,
Hast made my life the subiect of thy scorn:
And scornest now to lend thy fading ioyes,
T'ou length my life, whom friends haue left forlorne,
How well are they that die ere they be borne,
And neuer see thy sleights, which few men shun,
Till vnawares they helpless are vndone.

Oft haue I sung of loue and of his fire,
But now I finde that Poet was aduise,
Which made full feasts increasers of desire,
And proues weak loue was with the poore despise:
For when the life with food is not suffice,
What thoughts of loue, what motion of delight,
What pleasure can proceed from such a wight?

Witness

Greenes Groates-worth of wit.

Witnēs my want the murderer of my wit,
My rauisht sense of wonted fury rest,
Wants such conceit, as should in Poems sit,
Set downe the sorrow wherein I am left.
But therefore haue high heauens, their gifts bereft,
Because so long they lent them me to vse,
And I so long their bouny did abuse.

O that a yeere were granted me to liue,
And for that yeere my former wits restorde:
What rules of life, what counsell would I giue,
How should my sinne with sorrow be deplorde!
But I must die of every man abhorde,
Time loosely spent will not againe be worne,
My time is loosely spent, and I vndone.

*O horrenda fames, how terrible are thy assaults: but
Terribis conscientia moze wounding are thy stings.* Ah
Gentlemen, that liue to reade my broken and confused
lines, looke not I should (as I was wont) delight you
with vaine fantasies, but gather my follies altogether,
and as you would deale with so many parricides, cast
them into the fire; call them Telgones, for now they kill
their father, and euery letred line in them written, is a
deap piercing wound to my heart; euery idle houre spent
by any in reading them, brings a million of sorowes to
my soule. O that the teares of a miserable man (for
neuer yet was any man moze miserable) might wash
their memoies out with my death, and that those waikes
with me together might be interde. But Ah they can-
not, let my last waikes witness against them with me,
how I detest them. Black is the remembrance of my
blacker waikes, blacker then night, blacker then death,
blacker then hell.

Learn to wit by my repentance (Gentlemen,) and let
these few rules following be regarded in your lines.

Greene's Groat-worth of wit.

1 First, in all your actions set God before your eyes, for the feare of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom: Let his word be a lanterne to your feet, and a light vnto your paths, then shall you stand as firme rocks, and not be moued.

2 Beware of looking back, for God wil not be mocked; of him that hath receiued much, much shall be demanded.

3 If thou be single, and canst abstaine, turne thy eies from vanity, for there is a kinde of women, bearing the face of Angells, but the hearts of Demils, able to entrap the elect if it were possible.

4 If thou be married, forsake not the wife of thy youth to solow strange flesh, for whoremongers and adulterers, the Lord will iudge. The doze of a harlot leadeth downe to death, and in her lips there dwels destruction: her face is decked with odours, but she bringeth a man to a moysesell of head and nakednes: of which my selfe am instance.

5 If thou be left rich, remember those that want, and so deale, that by thy wilfulnesse thy selfe want not: Let not Lauerners and Mistrallers see thy Greentoes, for they wil bring the to a dishonourable grane.

6 Oppresse no man, for the crie of the wronged ascendeth to the eares of the Lord: neither delight to encrease by Mury, least thou lose thy habitation in the euerlasting Tabernacle.

7 Beware of building thy house to thy neighbours hurt, for the stones will cry to the timber, and they were laid together in blood: and those that so erect houses, calling them by their names, shall lye in the grane like theepe, and death shall gnaw vpon their soules.

8 If thou be poore, be also patient, and straine not to grow rich by indirect means, for goods so gotten shall vanish away like smoake.

9 If thou be a father, master, or teacher, soyne good examples with good counsell, els little analle p^{re}cepts.

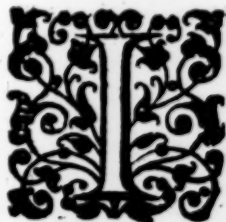
Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

cepts where life is different,

10 If thou be a son or seruant, despise not reproofe; for though correction be bitter at the first, it bringeth pleasure in the end.

Had I regarded the first of these rules, or beens obedient at the last, I had not now at my last ende, beene left thus desolate. But now, though to my selfe I giue Consilium post facta, yet to others they may serue for timely precepts. And therefore (while life giues leaue) will send warning to my old consozts which haue liued as loosely as my selfe: albeit weakenesse will scarce suffer me to write, yet to my fellow Schollers about this Citie, will I direct these few ensuing lines.

To those Gentlemen his Quondam acquaintaunce, that spend their wits in making Playes,
R.G. wisheth a better exercise, and wisdom to prevent his extremities.



I wofull experience may moue you (Gentlemen) to beware, or unheard of wretchednes, intreat you will look backe with sorrow on your time past, and endeuour with repentance to spend that which is to come: Wonder not; (for with this will I first begin) thou famous gracer of Tragedians, that Greene, who hath said with thee like the foole in his heart, There is no God, should now giue glorie vnto his greatnesse: for penetrating is his power, his hand lyes heauie vpon me he hath spoken vnto me with a voyce of thunder, and I haue left, he is a God that can punish enemies. Why should thy excellent wit, his gift be so blinded, that thou shouldst giue no glorie to the Giner: As it pestilent Machiuian

Greenes Gróat-worth of wit.

chitilian policie that thou hast studied? W punish follie! What are his rules but more confused mockeries, able to extirpate in small time, the generation of mankind. For if *Sic volo, sic inbeo*, hold in those that are able to command: and if it be lawfull *Fas et Nefas*, to do any thing that is beneficiall; onely Tyrants should possesse the Earth, and they striving to exceed in tyranny, shuld each to other be a slaughter man: till the mightiest out living all, one stroke were left for Death, that in one age mans life should end. The Brother of this Diabolicall Atheisme is dead, & in his life had neuer the felicitie he aymed at: but as he began in craft, ended in feare, and ended in despair. *Quam inscrutabilia sunt Dei indicia!* This murderer of many Brethren, had his conscience seared like Cayne: this betrayer of him that gaue his life for him, inherited the poztion of Iudas: this Apostata perished as ill as Iulian: and wilt thou my friend, be his Disciple? Looke vnto me, by him perswaded to that libertie; and thou shalt finde it an Infernall bondage. I know the least of my demerits merit this miserable death, but wilfull striving against knowne truth, exceedeth all the terrozs of my soule. Deferre not (with me) till this last point of extremitie: for little knowest thou how in the end thou shalt be visited.

With thee I toyne pong Iuuenal, that byting Satyrists, that lastly with me together wyte a Comedie. Swete Boy, might I aduise thee, be aduised, and get not many enemies by bitter wordes: inueigh against vaine men, for thou canst do it, no man better, no man so well: thou hast a libertie to reprove all, and name none: for one being spoken to, all are offended; none being blamed, no man is iniured. Stop shallow water still running, it will rage; tread on a toyme, it will turne: then blame not Schoolers who are vexed with sharpe and bitter Lines, if they reprove thy too much liberty of reprove.

And

Greenes Groats-worth of wit.

And thou no lesse deserving then the other two, in some things rarer, in nothing inferiour, *oziene* (as my selfe) to extreme shifts, a little haue I to say to thee: and were it not an idolatrous oath, I would sweare by swiſt *ſo*. George, thou art vnwoorthy better hap, ſith thou dependest on ſo insane a ſtay. Baſe minded men all thee of you if by my miſery y^e be not warned: ſo: vnto none of you (like me) ſought thoſe hurs to cleane: thoſe Puppets (I meane) that ſpeak from our mouths, thoſe Anticks garniſht in our colours. Is it not ſtrange that I, ſo to whom they all haue bin beholding: is it not like that you, to whom they all haue bin beholding, ſhall were y^e in that caſe that I am now) be both of them at ones forſaken? Yeſt truſt them not: ſo: there is an vpſtart Crow beautified with our feathers, that with his Tygres head, wrapt in a Players hyde, ſuppoſes hee is as well able to bombaſt out a Blanks verſe, as the beſt of you: & being an absolute *Iohannes fac totum*, is in his owne conceit the onely Shake-ſcene in a Countrey. Oh that I might intreat your rare wittes to be employed in moze profitable courtes: and let theſe Apes imitate your paſt Excellence, & neuer moze acquainte them with your admyred Inventions. I know the beſt Husband of you all will neuer proue an Uſurer, and the kindeſt of them all will neuer proue a kinde Purſe: yet whiſt you may, ſake you better ſpauſters: ſo: it is pittie men of ſuch rare wits ſhould be ſubiect to the pleaſures of ſuch rude grames.

In this I might inſert two moze, that both haue writ againſt theſe buckram Gentlemen: but let their owne worke ſerue to witneſſe againſt their owne wickedneſſe if they perſeuer to maintaine any moze ſuch peaſants. For other new commers, I leave them to the mercie of theſe painted monſters, who (I doubt not) will giue the beſt minded to deſpiſe them: ſo: the reſt, it ſkilts not though they make a ielt at them.

But now returns I againe to you thees, knowing my

Greene's Groat-worth of wit.

my miserie is to you no newes? and let me heartilie
intreate you to be warned by my harmes. Delight
not (as I haue done,) in irreligious oathes, for from
the blasphemers house, a curse shall not depart: De-
spise drunkennes, which wasteth the wit, and ma-
king men all equall vnto beasts: flie Lust, as the
deathman of the soule, and defile not the Temple of
the holy Ghost. Abhorre those Epicures, whose
loose life hath made Religion loathsome to your
eares, and when they sooth you with tearmes of ma-
sterhip, remember Robert Greene, whom they
haue often so flattered, perishes now so: want of
comfort. Remember Gentlemen your liues are like
so many light tapers, that are with care deliuered to
all of you to maintaine: these with wind-pufft wrath
may be extinguished, which drunkennesse put out,
which negligence let fall: for mans time of it selfe is
not so short, but it is moze shortned by sinne. The
fire of my light is now at the last snuffe, and the want
of wherewith to sustaine it, there is no substance for
life to feed on. Trust not then (I beseech yee) lest to such
weake staves: for they are as changeable in minde, as in
many attires. Well, my hand is tyed, and I am forced to
leane where I would begin: for a whole booke cannot
containe their wrongs, which I am forced to knit vp in
some few lines of words.

*Desirous that you should liue, though
himselfe be dying.*

ROBERT GREENE.

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

Now to all men I bid farev'ell in this sort,

*with this conceined Fable of the old Comed-
dian Aesop.*

A Ant and a Grasshopper walking together on a
Greene: the one, carefully skipping; the other, care-
fully prying what winters provision was scattered
in the way: the Grasshopper scolding (as wantons
will) this needles thurst (as he termed it) rep'und him thus:

The greedy Miser, thirsteth still for gaine,
His thirst is theft, his weale workes others woe:
That foole is fond which will in caues remaine,
When 'mongst faire sweetes he may at pleasure goe.

To this the Ant, perceiving the Grasshoppers meaning,
quickly replied:

The thrifty husband spares what vnthrifts spends;
His thirst's no theft, for dangers to provide;
Trust to thy selfe, small hope in want yeeld friends:
A Caue is better then the deserts wild.

In that time these two parted, the one to his pleasure,
the other to his laboz. Anon Winter grew on, and rest
from the Grasshopper his wanted moisture. When weakely
skippes he to the meadowbzinkes, where till fell winter
he abode. But storms continually potozing, he went for
succoz to the Ant his olde acquaintance, to whom he had
scarce discovered his estate, but the little toozme made
this replie:

Pack hence, quoth he, thou idle lazie worme,
My house doth harbor no vnthrifty mates:
Thou scorn'dst to toyle, and now thou feel'st the storme,
And staru'st for fooode, while I am fed with cates:
Use no intreats, I will relentlesse rest,
For toying labour hates an idle Guest.

Greene's Groat, worth of wit.

The Grasshopper speeple, helpeles, and strengthlesse,
got into the next brook, and in the passing sand digde him-
selfe a pit: by which likewise he engraued this Epitaph.

When Springs Greene prime arrayde me with delight,
And euery power with youthfull vigour fild,
Gauē strength to worke what euer fancie wild,
I neuer feard the force of winters spight,

When first I saw the Sunne the day beginne,
And drie the mornings teares from heabes and grasse,
I little thought his chearefull light would passe,
Till vgly night with darkenesse entered in,
And then day lost, I mournde, spring past, I waild,
But neither teares for this or that auaild.

Then too too late I praide the Emmets paine,
That sought in spring, a harbour gainst the heate,
And in the haruett, gathered winters meate,
Perceiuing famine, frosts, and formeie raine,

My wretched end may warne, Greene springing youth,
To vse delights, as toys that will decreaue,
And scorpe the world, before the world them leaue,
For all worlds trust, is ruine without ruth.

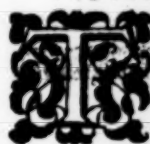
Then blest are they that like the rowling Ann,
Provide in time gainst wofull winters waite.

With this the Grasshopper passing to the weathers ex-
tremitie, dyed comfortlesse without remede. Like him my
selfe: like me, shall all that trust to friends or times incor-
stancie. Now saint I of my last infirmities, beseeching them
that shall burie my bodie, to publish this last farewell, writ-
ten with my wretched hand.

Fœlicem fuisse infaustum.



A Letter Written to his Wife, found vvith
this Booke after his death.



The remembrance of many wrongs offered thee, and thy unexpected vertues, addes greater sorrow to my miserable state then I can utter, or thou conceiue. Neither is it lessened by consideration of thy absence, (though Nature would let me hardly behold thy face) but exceedingly aggravated, so that I cannot (as I ought) to thy owne selfe reconcile my selfe, that thou mightest witness my inward woe at this instant, that haue made thee a wofull wife for so long a time. But equall heauen hath denied that comfort, giuing at my last neede, like succour as I haue sought all my life: being in this extremity as void of helpe, as thou hast beene of hope. Reason would, that after so long waste, I should not send thee a Child to bring thee greater charge: but consider, hee is the fruit of thy wombe, in whose face regard not the Fathers so much, as thy owne perfections. Hee is yet graine, and may grow strait, if he be carefully tended: otherwise apt enough (I leave me) to follow his fathers folly. That I haue offended thee highly, I know, that thou canst forget my injuries, I hardly beleene: yet perswade I my selfe if thou saw my wretched estate, thou couldest not but lament it: nay, certainly I know thou wouldest. All my wrongs muste them selues about me, euery euill at once plagues me. For my contempt of God, I am condemned of men: for my swearing and forswearing, no man will beleue me: for my gluttony, I suffer hunger: for my drunkenness, thirst: for

Greenes Groat-worth of wit.

my adultery, blacorous soyes. Thus, God hath cast me down;
that I might be humbled, and punished me for example of
others sinne: And although he suffers me in this world to
perish without succour, yet trust I in the world to come to
find mercy, by the merits of my Saviour, to whom I com-
mend thee, and commit my soule.

Thy repentant Husband for his disloyalty,

ROBERT GREENE

GREENES EPITAPH.

Discoursed Dialogue-wise betweene *Life*
and *Death*.

LIFE.

Stay grizly Thanatos, pull back thy spleene,
Triumph'ring ouer Tombes, what hast thou done?
To blast the *Muses* Lawrell, which was Greene;
Minerua's nurse child, great *Apollo's* soune:
O what is't made of? Bold, thy stabbe can shunne?
Sure th' hast no eyes to dart at random so,
To strike the Cedar, let the *Mush-rumpe* grow,

Where *Life* is low'd, th' art too soon quick to kill,
And to epitomize, with pangs, their ioy:
Where *Life* is low'd, th' art slow, and backward still,
And dost adourne their death with lifes annoy:
That Tyrant-like, the Bell dost still destroy:
To some thou art a sterne vnbidden guest,
But who implores thy helpe thou helpest, if least.

Greenes Epitaph.

DEATH.

*Why wouldst thou creepe longer on this dusty Round,
Where wealth's but want; where Treasure's won, but lost;
Where all good Hopes, in one ill-hap, are drown'd.
In some things, all: in all things some are crost;
And they but little, that possesse the most.
Unmixed Ioyes, to none on earth befall,
Who leaſt, has ſome; who moſt, has neuer all.*

*For that, muſt I his purer Part unſtroude,
(A Kings command cannot withſtand my right)
And gine his priſon'd Soule, midſt miſty Cloud.
A larger Horriſon to emblaſe her light:
Her Beauty then, appearing Sun-like bright,
Shall ſhewne the earth, to ſhine (ſure Angels eyes)
In Bliffe, above the Star-beſpangled ſkies.*

LIFE.

*You ſacred ſiſters, from whoſe Boſome's cropt,
A freſher Flower, then by Alcionus bred:
Through your eyes Lymbecke, let your lones be drop.
(Though oſian true, that more oſi has beene ſaid,
The ſayrer Flower, the ſooner withered)
To keepe him Greene, with world-outwearing Rimes,
To th' admiration of ſucceeding times.*

*Hec, whoſe gold-typed, Eare-attracting Tongue,
With rare Cyllenian Muſicke charmed ſo,
A. Marbles danc'd, when Thebes Muſitian ſung:
Let rowling Teares in Pleny ſides oreſlow,
For loſſe of Englands ſecond Cicero.*

*To make's not being, be, as he hath beene,
Greene, neuer-wither'd, ever-wither'd, Greene.*

I. H.

FINIS